

Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

Fun Family Activities for Pre-Schoolers

2004



RI Department
of Human Services



RI Department
of Education



Rhode Island
KIDS COUNT

www.ride.ri.gov/els

Rhode Island Early Learning Standards 0.1

Fun Family Activities for Pre-Schoolers is filled with information and enjoyable ways to support the development and learning of your preschool child. The activities in each of the eight sections are based on the Rhode Island Early Learning Standards and are designed to help your child develop skills that are important for kindergarten. They were developed by a group of Rhode Island parents, teachers and other early childhood leaders in hopes that mothers and fathers, grandparents and caregivers will use these activities with the preschool children in their lives.

Play, Play and More Play

Children learn best through play. When you begin to use these activities, your child will learn new skills and develop a love for learning. Most are designed to fit into your day-to-day activities.

Design Your Own Treasure Box

Some families have created a Treasure Box to hold their activity cards. Try using a child's shoebox, a tissue box or other household container as a special holder for the cards. Use paints, markers or crayons with your child to decorate the box. Personalize your Treasure Box with photos of your child. **Use your imagination and have fun.**



Create Your Own Activities

We encourage you to create activities to add to this packet. Talk with other parents and your child's teacher to come up with new ideas. Then, **use the back of these cards** or make additional cards to write down your very own family favorites.



Before You Begin

Think about the ways you want your child to grow and learn during this important time in their life and then write down your answers to the following questions:

- What are your child's favorite toys and activities?

-
- What are some of your child's strengths?

-
- What do you most want your child to learn?
-

As you review each section of the packet, keep your answers in mind and choose activities that match your child's interests. Select activities that are not only fun, but will help your child learn the skills you think are important.



When It's Time For Kindergarten

As your child is getting ready to enter kindergarten, think about the activities you have enjoyed together and the ways your child has grown and developed. Write down your answers to the following questions. Share this information with your child's kindergarten teacher to help them get to know your child.

- What activities in this kit did your child enjoy the most?

-
- How does your child learn best?

-
- What are some of the new skills that your child has developed over the last year?

-
- In what ways would you like to see your child continue to grow and develop?
-



Acknowledgments

We want to extend our sincerest thanks to the parents, teachers and early childhood leaders who drew from their expertise and experience as parents to come up with winning ideas to include in this first edition of **Fun Family Activities for Pre-Schoolers**.

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Approaches to Learning



All About Learning

All children can learn and be successful. As parents we soon discover that children learn in very different ways. Over time you begin to discover how your own child learns best and recognize your child's unique learning style.

Children learn best through play. Play is how they make sense of a grown-up world. Think about ways to encourage your child to try new things and use their past experiences to learn new skills.

These cards are filled with wonderful ideas that will help your child discover that learning is fun as you encourage them to be:

- curious
- persistent
- self-organized and
- problem-solvers



Books Your Child Will Enjoy

Good Night Moon by Margaret Wise Brown
Barnyard Dance! by Sandra Boynton
Curious George by H. A. Rey
The Carrot Seed by Ruth Krauss
Owen by Kevin Henkes
Brave Irene by William Steig

Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

1

Curiosity

Is your child a bundle of questions? "Why do birds sing? How do you make ketchup? Where does this road go?" Curiosity is an important aspect of how children learn. Have fun answering the questions together.

Approaches to Learning 1.1

Questions, Questions and More Questions

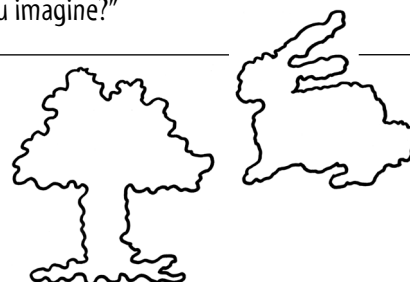
- **Provide** your child with new experiences...
Go to the park, walk on a trail, play on the beach or take a bus ride. Talk about what you see, hear and smell and notice the people and things around you.
- **Ask** questions as you explore and experience new things...
Choose questions that begin with "Why" or "What" to get your child thinking.
- **Encourage** your child to ask questions of you...
When your child is asking questions, encourage your **child** to think of the answer. Say, "What do you think?" and then see if you can discover the answer together.



RI* Family Favorite

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

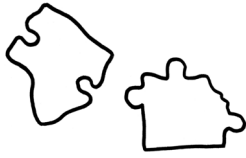
You and your child can lie down on the grass, gaze up at the sky and ask one another, "What do you see?" If your child sees clouds in the sky, ask, "What do they look like?" See if your child can spot a cloud that looks like an animal, a tree or someone with a beard. Then, take turns making up stories about where the clouds go when they float away or disappear. Ask, "What do you think lies above the clouds? What do you imagine?"



1

Persistence

Help your child to continue to play with games and projects that take a while to complete. Puzzles, board games and sports activities are fun ways to encourage your child to remain with activities that involve several different steps.



Tips for Families:

- Give your child praise for each small step they accomplish
- Join your child when the task is taking too long
- Congratulate your child when the project is complete

"Good Job!"

Doing Puzzles: How do the pieces fit?

Doing a puzzle can take time and concentration. Creating and putting together puzzles helps your child learn to work towards completing a project.



- **Choose** interlocking puzzles that match your child's age and ability
- **Look** for puzzles at discount stores and yard sales, but make sure they are in good shape and that all the pieces are included
- **Visit** your library. Most libraries have wonderful puzzles that you can do while you are visiting or that you can borrow to take home.

Start with simple interlocking puzzles and move to more difficult puzzles when your child is ready. This will allow your child to experience success and avoid frustration.

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RI* Family Favorite

MEMORY GAME

1. Cut ten index cards in half.
2. Draw the same picture, letter or number on two cards so that you have two matching cards.
3. Place all the cards on the floor with the pictures facing down.
4. Let your child turn over two cards at a time to try to find a match. If they do not match, turn them face down again and return them to their original spot.
5. Now it's your turn.
6. Once you find a match, take the two cards away and keep them by your side.
7. Take turns until all the matches are located.

1

One Two, Buckle My Shoe

Here are ways to encourage your child to organize themselves and solve problems on their own.

Encourage your child to be self-organized as they go about daily routines, get ready to play and clean up after themselves.

1. Create places for your child to put their toys, clothes and other items. Label these places with the name of the item and a picture.
2. Set the table together. Start by placing the correct number of chairs around the table. Have your child count out the number of plates, napkins, forks and spoons that will be needed and help set the table.
3. When getting ready for bed, have your child begin to see it as a step-by-step process. First, we take off our clothes and put them in the hamper. Then, we put on our PJs. Next, we brush our teeth and use the bathroom. And finally, we read a story before going to sleep.

RI* Family Favorite



MAKE A PICTURE SCHEDULE

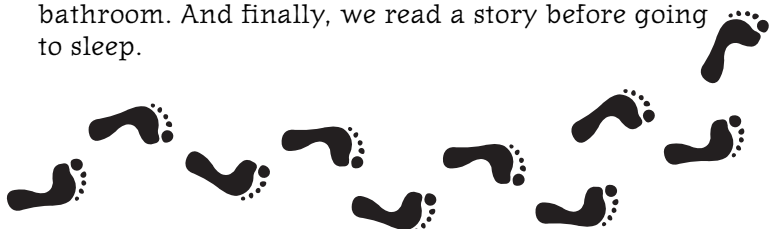
Make a picture schedule to help your child with their daily routines.

- Take pictures with your camera or cut pictures from magazines that show each step you want your child to complete
- Put your pictures in the right order and make a poster
- Ask your child to follow the pictures when getting ready in the morning, preparing for bed or completing other routines at home

Solving Problems

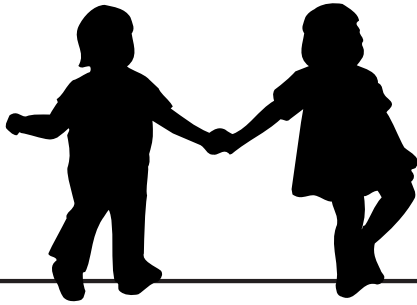
Throughout the day you can build your child's reasoning and problem solving skills. Encourage your child to think about different ways to solve problems. Here are some examples:

- The bathtub water has gotten too cold. "What do we do?"
- There is one cookie left for two people. "How can we solve this so everyone is happy?"
- "What would you do if you couldn't find mommy on the playground?" These skills can be extremely important in possible real life situations.



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Social and Emotional Development



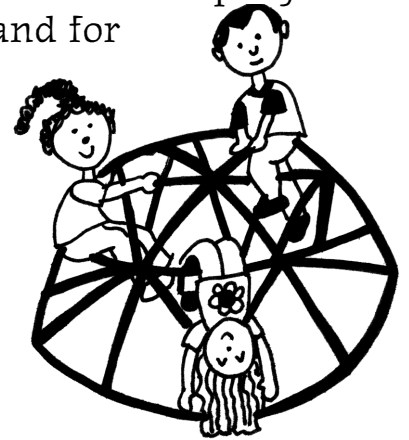
Being social is such a big part of who we are as people. Children should learn to join in and get along with others while feeling confident about who they are as well as their place in the community. Children learn first by watching their parents and then their friends.

When your child shares positive experiences and is accepted by others, your child is developing a strong foundation for school and for the future.

Books Your Child Will Enjoy

Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes
On the Day You Were Born by Debra Frasier
Houses and Homes by Ann Morris
Alexander and the Horrible, Terrible, No Good, Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst
*Abuela** by Arthur Dorros

*recommended for grandparents



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2

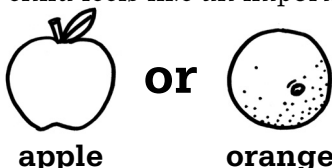
Your Child's Sense of Self

Children benefit from experiences that give them a better sense of themselves as unique and important individuals.

- **Share** songs and stories that you heard when you were a child
- **Tell** your child stories about your own childhood
- **Share** stories about what your child was like as a baby
- **Praise** your child often! Say things like: "Good job getting dressed by yourself this morning."

Choices

Provide opportunities for your child to make choices from several different options. For example: "Which book should we read? Do you want to eat an apple or an orange?" Each time you follow through with that choice, your child feels like an important member of the family.



apple

orange

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Social and Emotional Development 2.1

RI* Family Favorite

CREATE A COLLAGE OF FAMILY & FRIENDS

Gather different photos of family and friends that are important to your child. Tape them onto a large piece of paper or attach them to the refrigerator with tape or magnets. Tell stories about things that you and your child have done with these people.

DIFFERENT FACES



Help your child learn to recognize and name their own feelings and the feelings of others. Play a game of "making faces." Take turns asking each other to make different facial expressions. "Show me a happy face. Now make a sad face, then an angry face and a surprised face."

Have your child name the feeling by telling a short story. "Let's pretend you just lost your favorite toy. How would you feel? If you found your toy again, how would you feel?"

Ask your child to draw a face of someone feeling happy, sad, surprised and tired. Talk to your child about the reasons people feel these emotions and how you could help.

2

Developing a Sense of Responsibility

Think of ways that you can help your children become aware of their responsibilities with family and friends.

Encourage your child to help. This is how children learn cooperation. Choose a few responsibilities that your child can do successfully such as:

- Picking up their toys
- Selecting their own clothing
- Wiping off the table
- Taking out the garbage
- Helping to wash the car
- Picking up leaves in the yard
- Putting clean clothes away
- Feeding the pet



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Family Favorite



✓ I CAN DO IT MYSELF

You may want to create a chart of things your children can do on a regular basis to take care of themselves and help a little around the house.

- ☐ Ask your child for some help in locating pictures in magazines that relate to the task
- ☐ Cut them out together and glue them onto a piece of paper
- ☒ Now ask your child to make a check mark each time they complete a task

They will feel proud of their accomplishment!

★ Use the back of this card to write a few ways your child can help at home... ➡

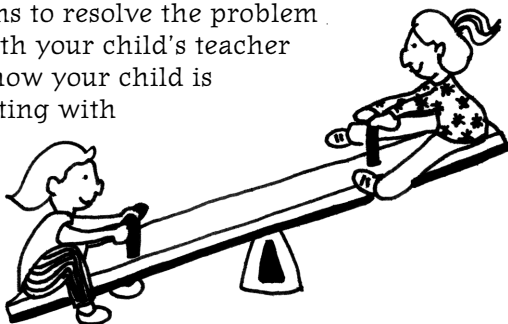
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Family and Friends

Through interactions with family and friends, children learn to play, share and work together. They also learn to care for one another and resolve conflicts that may arise.

Making Friends

- Spend time at the playground so that your child can play with other children
- Invite one of your child's school or neighborhood friends to your house to play
- If your child and a friend can not decide what to do, help them by suggesting a few ideas
- Praise your child and their friends when you see them playing cooperatively
- If they are disagreeing, help them to think of solutions to resolve the problem
- Talk with your child's teacher about how your child is interacting with friends



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Family Time

Children enjoy spending time with their family.

- ✂ Create special traditions and memories that your child will always remember – Friday night pizza, fishing on Opening Day, game night, walks in the park, Sunday dinner, talking and reading before bedtime
- ✂ Have conversations at mealtimes. Family members can take turns sharing stories about their day.
- ✂ Spend time together each day talking and listening to your child's stories



Let your child know that **they are an important member of the family.**

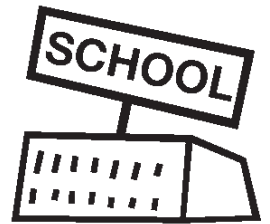
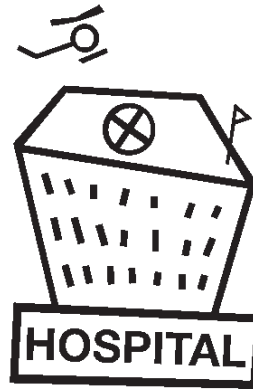
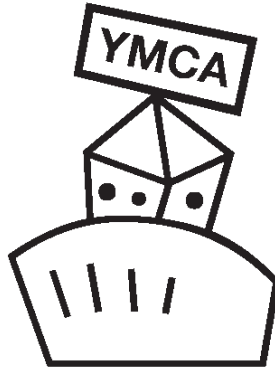
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Social and Emotional Development 2.4

A Sense of Belonging

Your child is beginning to see themselves as a part of many different groups – family, school, neighborhood and recreational programs. This encourages your child to develop a sense of belonging to your community.

- **Send** notes and pictures to friends and family
- **Help** your child to understand that the differences in people are what make every person unique and special and that everyone is the same in many ways
- **Let** your child see you helping others in the neighborhood
- **Bring** a bag to the beach or park so that you and your child can pick up trash that people have left
- **Talk** about the places you visit in your neighborhood or community such as the library, hospital, post office and doctor's office and the roles of people in those places



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Social and Emotional Development 2.5

Our Family's Favorite

Use this card to write down ways your family enjoys spending time together...

FAMILY TIME

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Language Development and Communication



We now know that when we help children learn language, we are helping their brains develop in very important ways.

Families do so much for their child when they make sure that their days are filled with opportunities to speak, listen and express their feelings. Take a few minutes to talk about what happened yesterday, what is happening today and what might happen tomorrow. **The conversations you have with your child are invaluable.**

Books Your Child Will Enjoy

I Read Signs by Tana Hoban
Owl Moon by Jane Yolen
Caps for Sale by Erphyr Slobodkina
Listen to the Rain by Bill Martin
One Duck Stuck by Phyllis Root

If your family speaks a language other than English, continue to tell stories and read to your child in your home language. At the same time, encourage your child to make progress in listening and understanding English.

Sing silly songs, say rhymes, share family stories and talk with your child about what you are doing as you go through your day.

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Language Development and Communication 3.1

Listening and Understanding

Children become good communicators when they learn the skills of listening and understanding.

- **Share** family stories and family traditions
- **Read** books together every day. After reading a short story, ask your child to retell the story.
- **Talk** to your child about what you are doing as you move through your daily activities. For instance, "I am going to make dinner now. What vegetable should we have? What should we put in our salad?"



- **Ask** questions that use the words **what...if** such as:

- "What would it be like if we lived on the bottom of the ocean? How about the North Pole?"
- What would it be like if we lived on a farm with a lot of animals?
- What would you do if you had wings?"



Games

Play lots of different games so that your child can learn to listen to directions and follow them. Think about the games you remember from your own childhood and play them with your child.

Here are a few examples:

- 👍 Follow the Leader
- 👍 Simon Says
- 👍 The Hokey Pokey
- 👍 Red Light, Green Light
- 👍 Duck-Duck-Goose
- 👍 Mother May I



Go Fish!



3

Following Directions

With your support, your child will begin to follow directions that take a number of steps to complete.

Tips for Families:

Some children find it difficult to follow through when you say things like, "Please get your coat and shoes and meet me at the back door." Try asking your child to repeat the directions back to you. Your conversation might go like this:

Parent: "What do you need to do first?"

Child: "Find my coat."

Parent: "Then what?"

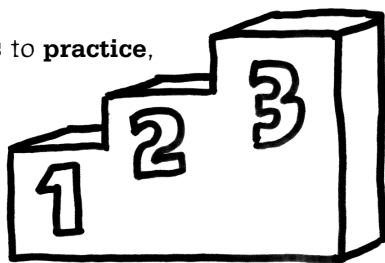
Child: "Get my shoes."

Parent: "And last?"

Child: "Meet you at the backdoor!"

Parent: "Great!"

After lots of opportunities to **practice**, your child will get it!



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Family Favorite

SIMON SAYS

Here is a game for the whole family to enjoy. Each member of the family takes a turn playing Simon. Simon gives the players a series of commands such as, "**Simon says** touch your toes. **Simon says** touch your chin." All players must follow Simon's instructions IF and ONLY IF Simon begins the command with the words "**Simon says**."

Players have to listen carefully because once in a while, Simon will give a command and not say, "**Simon says**." All of the players who follow the command when Simon fails to say, "**Simon says**" are out of the game. The last person standing is the winner!

When your child is ready, try giving two commands together...and then three like "**Simon says** touch the top of your head, then your knees and then clap your hands."

3

Speaking and Communicating

Children are born with the ability to communicate. By four years of age, their ability to express their thoughts and ideas through speaking, gestures and body language takes on a new importance. When you encourage your child to express themselves and their ideas, you will **see their confidence grow**.

- During meal time, bath time and other daily routines, have your child describe what they did that day. "What was your favorite part of the day? Tell me one new thing that you learned today."
- When you go somewhere new, talk about this place with your child and use new words related to the experience
- When reading to your child, stop and talk about what new words mean. Encourage your child to use the pictures and story as clues to the meaning. Try to use these new words in future conversations you have together.
- Pretend play allows children to experiment with conversation and story telling



Family Favorite



A PRETEND PICNIC

Plan a pretend picnic with your child. Begin by asking questions like:

- "Who should we invite?"
- "What should we serve?"
- "What food should we pack?"

Then together pack your basket with cups, plates, napkins and food. Lay out your blanket just about anywhere and pretend!

Puppets

Use paper bags or different colored socks to make puppets. Make faces on your puppets with markers or crayons. Glue on yarn, buttons or whatever you think of to decorate your puppets. Now act out your favorite stories!

Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

Literacy



Children learn that words can be spoken, listened to, read and written. Children at this age become excited about using pictures and letters to communicate.

Reading out loud to your child on a regular basis is so important. This activity helps your child learn to read. By being exposed to books and print and through conversations about the people and events important to them, your child will discover that they can share their ideas through written words.

Books Your Child Will Enjoy

Night in the Country by Cynthia Rylant

Night Noises by Mem Fox

Alphabet City by Stephen T. Johnson

The Jolly Postman by Allen Ahlberg

The Day of Ahmed's Secret

by Florence H. Parry

Get ready to have fun. You can help your child:

- **Listen** and respond to stories, poems, rhymes and songs
- **Discover** that print is everywhere
- **Read** different kinds of books together
- **Express** themselves in different ways such as drawing, scribbling and pretend writing
- **Learn** some letters and words, especially the letters in their own name



Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

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Writing

Provide your child with opportunities to explore early writing – an important part of developing your child's literacy skills.

Literacy 4.1

- ⇒ Create a writing box. Fill the box with writing supplies that your child can use such as crayons, markers, pencils, pens and different kinds of paper.
- ⇒ Encourage scribbling and pretend writing and provide support and encouragement for writing letters. Once your child learns to write a few letters, you can expect to see pretend spelling.
- ⇒ Let your child sit side-by-side with you when you are busy with paper work. Your child can be busy with their own work as well.
- ⇒ As you write notes and letters to friends and relatives, give your child the opportunity to dictate a personal message that you can include in the note
- ⇒ Write stories together about things your child likes or experiences that you have shared together
- ⇒ Once your child learns to write a few letters, help them write the letters in their name



RI* Family Favorite

SHAVING CREAM LETTERS

What you need:

- ☞ Cookie Sheet
- ☞ Shaving Cream



Spread shaving cream on the cookie sheet. You and your child can spread the shaving cream with your fingers so that it covers the bottom of the sheet. Name a letter and write it in the cream — have your child copy it and then rub to erase. Make the sound that goes with the letter. You can write your child's name and other familiar words. Your child will love how the shaving cream feels!

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★ Use the back of this card to have your child write their name from left to right. Don't worry about what the letters look like... ➡

4

Nurture a Love for Reading

The love of reading is a life-long gift that you can give your child!

Literacy  4.2

When reading to your child:

- Let your child choose a book. Find a cozy, comfortable place to sit together.
- Read the title or name of the book out loud, followed by the names of the author (the person who wrote the book) and the illustrator (the person who made the pictures)
- As you read, change voices for the different characters
- After reading a few pages, wonder out loud about the characters and the story. Ask, "What do you think will happen next?"
- After reading the book, talk about the story. Ask questions and encourage your child to ask questions too!
- Have your child retell the story to someone else like mom, dad, sister, brother or grandparent
- Tell stories and read to your child in the language that is spoken at home
- And...**reread favorite books!**



Books are Special

- 📖 Reserve a place in your home that is within your child's reach for their books and magazines
- 📖 Introduce your child to different kinds of books to see which are most interesting
- 📖 Build your collection by borrowing from the library or going to yard sales and second hand stores. As you add books to your child's collection, be on the lookout for:
 - Books on any subjects your child shows an interest in like dinosaurs, trains, sports or dogs
 - Favorite story and picture books
 - Books on colors, shapes, sizes and families
 - Stories with repetition
 - Fairy tales and folk tales
 - Alphabet and counting books

You can even **download books** off the Internet!

Here are some websites for you to visit:

- www.pbs.org/parents
- www.kidzone.ws
- www.starfall.com



★ Use the back of this card to list your child's favorite books... ➡

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Letters and Words

Look around at all the examples of print to read and share with your child.

Literacy  4.3

- Sort the mail together. Give your child the junk mail to open and pretend to read. Read letters, cards or postcards sent to your house out loud.
- Let your child play with old greeting cards and pretend to send them to family and friends
- Read the newspaper comics and look at the ads together



- When in a restaurant, share your menu with your child. Point to the items in the kid's menu as you read their choices.

- Read the traffic signs, billboards, store and restaurant signs out loud as you drive in the car



- Have your child join you at the computer as you read and send email messages
- Read cereal boxes, seed packets and the titles of CDs and DVDs
- Place labels on a few objects in your home like the bed and the chair in your child's room

A During their preschool years, children learn to name some of the letters of the alphabet and the sounds they make.

- Children usually learn to **match** letters that look alike first. Then, they are able to **point** to a letter when you name it. Lastly, they can **name** the letters on their own.
- Help your child to search for certain letters on street signs, stores, restaurants and license plates while you are in the car
- If you have a set of magnetic letters, put them on the refrigerator. Make your child's name with the letters. Together, name the letters and the sounds they make.
- Allow your child to use the computer keyboard or an old typewriter to write different letters and write their name

b
c
D
e
F
G
h
I
J
K
L
M
N
O
P
Q
R
S
t
U
V
W
X
Y
Z



RI* Family Favorite

NAME THAT LETTER

Write a few letters on a piece of paper such as A, O and W. Use your finger to write one letter on your child's back. Ask your child to find it on the paper. Name the letter for your child. Switch places!

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4

Tuning Into Sounds

With help from you, your child will begin to notice certain sounds in words. Some words rhyme at the end like “bug” and “rug.” Your child will then start to recognize the sounds at the beginning of words.

Rhyming

- Sing songs, repeat familiar nursery rhymes and read books that are written in rhyming words
- Make up rhymes with your child. Ask your child, “What rhymes with cat?” (sat, bat, mat) or “What rhymes with tall?” (ball, fall, mall).

Help your child begin to notice the sounds at the beginning of words:

Write a letter on the front of a paper bag. You can begin with the first letter of your child’s name or a letter your child already knows. Together, find small items around the house that start with the same sound as the letter. Place the items in the bag. As your child puts them into the bag, name the objects together. Give your child plenty of practice finding objects that begin with the same sound. Then you can play the game by using two bags and two letters. After you have two bags filled with household objects, put all the items on the table. Together, put the objects in the correct letter bags. Over time, you can introduce more letters.

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RI* Family Favorite

A BOOK OF MY OWN

Create a book with your child that includes important events and activities that occur both at home and at school:

- Start your book by using a three-ring binder or make one yourself by stapling construction paper together
- Look through magazines with your child and cut out and glue pictures to decorate the cover. Let your child choose the pictures.
- Begin to fill the pages with pictures your child draws of favorite people, places and events. Include family pictures.
- Label the pages by having your child tell you what to write under each picture
- Let your child’s teacher know about the book so that school activities can be included



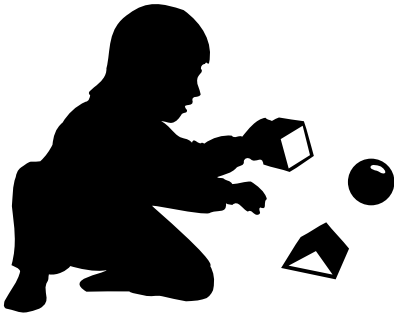
4

Tell Me a Story

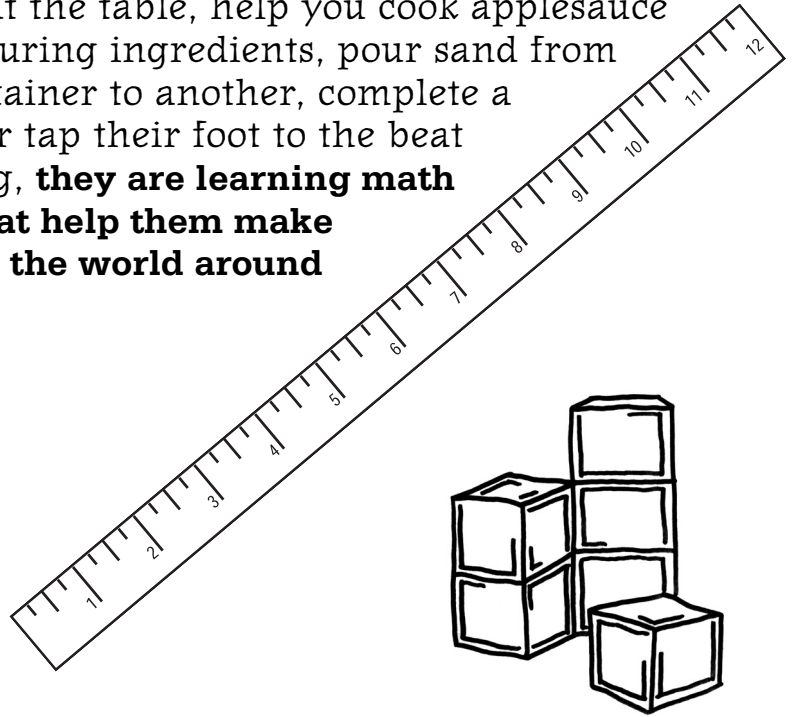
Have your child tell you their favorite story and write it down here...

TITLE:

Mathematics



When children hand out napkins to each person at the table, help you cook applesauce by measuring ingredients, pour sand from one container to another, complete a puzzle or tap their foot to the beat of a song, **they are learning math skills that help them make sense of the world around them.**



Books Your Child Will Enjoy

Math in the Bath by Sara Atherley
A Chair for My Mother by Vera Williams
The Doorbell Rang by Pat Hutchins
Zin! Zin! Zin! A Violin by Lloyd Moss
One Grain of Rice by Demi

Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

5

Counting, Matching and Sorting

There are so many games you can play that involve counting, matching, measuring and organizing. Before long your child will use their math skills to begin to solve problems.

- **Count** together as you go up and down the stairs
- **Write** numbers in the squares when you play hopscotch
- **Sort** toys by colors, sizes or shapes
- **Introduce** the names of different coins



Sort as You Shop

Ask your child to help **sort** groceries by putting together all of the foods that are the same. Vegetables in one place, canned goods in another and fruit in another. Then, your child can **count** the number of items in each pile and then help you to put them away.



Measure as You Cook

Ask your child to read the **numbers** that appear in recipes. "Can you see how many cups of milk I need?" Help your child count and pour the milk into the bowl. Use language like, "You poured in one cup. How many do we need to add to get two?"

Mathematics 5.1

RI* Family Favorite



MAKING BATH TIME FUN

During bath time, encourage your child to learn math skills while having fun.

- **Count** fingers and toes. You could even try to count by fives.
- Add toys, plastic cups or bowls to the bath water. Count together with your child as you put the items into the water. Ask your child, "Which is **bigger**? Which is **smaller**?"
- Encourage your child to pour water **into** and **out of** containers, making them **full** and then making them **empty**. Have your child compare and decide which containers will hold **more** or **less** than the other.
- Help your child to notice the bath toys that **sink** and those that **float**. Use a plastic bowl that floats and add items one at a time, counting as you go. Ask your child to **predict** how many items it will hold before it sinks! At the end of bath time have your child remove the items one by one, counting as you go.

Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

5

Shapes, Shapes and More Shapes

Help your child get excited about recognizing, naming and creating different shapes.

Mathematics  5.2

Finding Shapes

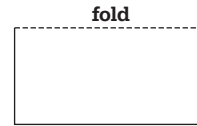
Your child can learn about shapes as you go about your day. **Have fun** as you discover and talk about all the shapes around you.

- ▲ Go on a "Shape Hunt" with your child, both inside and outside your home. Find objects that are circles, triangles or squares. "Can you find any rectangles in your room? How about the door, the books and the pillow?"
- Play the game, "I See Something and It Is Round." Your child can keep guessing items that fit the description until they guess the item you have in mind. Give clues by describing what the object is next to, under or near.
- ◆ Make different shapes using dough and cookie cutters
- Find household items that can be used to trace different shapes. Use the end of an empty toilet paper roll to make circles. Use the bottom of the cereal box to make rectangles.
- ♥ Talk about the differences they see in shapes. Ask "How many sides does a rectangle, square and triangle have?"

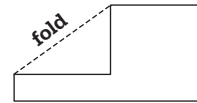
Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

RI* Family Favorite

MAKING PAPER HATS



Step 1: Fold a newspaper sheet in half. (They usually come that way!) To make the hat smaller, just trim the paper before you begin.



Step 2: Fold both top corners in towards the middle evenly. Talk about the different shapes you are creating as you fold.



Step 3: Fold the bottom up on both sides. Place a piece of tape where the arrows are to keep the hat together for hours of paper hat fun!

Making Paper Hats can be found on the web at TheParentsSite.com

5

Naming, Grouping and Measuring

With a little help from you, your child will begin to recognize that similar objects can be grouped together into simple categories. Children also discover that objects can be compared by size, length, height and weight.

Mathematics  5.3

RI* Family Favorite

SORTING LAUNDRY

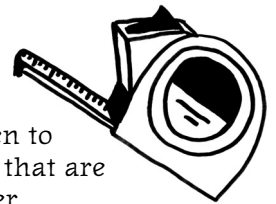
Your child can learn to sort and group objects by helping with the laundry.

- ⑥ When the laundry is clean and dry, children can sort and stack the laundry by putting all the clothes together that are alike such as underwear in one pile, socks in another
- ⑥ Children can sort socks by size and color. They can also sort by "owner." "My shirts on this chair, Dad's shirts on the other chair."
- ⑥ While sorting and folding clothes talk to your child about what they wore yesterday, what they are wearing today and what they might wear tomorrow. This will help your child understand that events take place in the past, present or future.



Learning to Measure

- Have your child use fingers as measuring tools. Tell your children to find things in your home or yard that are the same **size** as their pinky finger.
- Compare the **weights** of canned goods and boxes on your kitchen shelves. Tell your child to hold one item in each hand and decide which is **lighter** and which is **heavier**.
- Show your child how to weigh produce on the scale at the grocery store. Add items then take them off and see how the scale changes. Guess how many items it will take to make one **pound**.
- Ask your child to lay out your shoes in a row and lay down beside them. See how many "feet" **tall** they are.
- Talk about measurement as you use it in daily life. For instance, say, "Let's hang this picture six **inches** above the bookshelf in your room." Show your child how you use a ruler and tape measure to determine the size of things around the house.



Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

★ Use the back of this card to chart your child's height and weight... ➡

Science



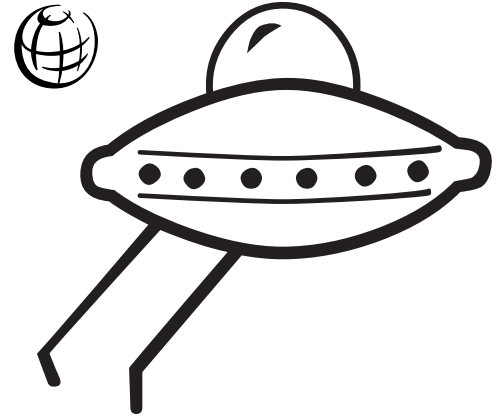
Children are captivated and curious about the world around them. They are naturally interested in exploring, observing and investigating. Children learn about science by asking questions and making discoveries about what they observe.



By encouraging their sense of wonder, we help children become scientific thinkers.

Books Your Child Will Enjoy

Freight Train by Donald Crews
The Snow Day by Ezra Jack Keats
In the Small Small Pond by Denise Flemming
The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle
What the Sun Sees, What the Moon Sees by Nancy Tafuri



Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

6

Discovering the World Around Us

Children are very interested in the world around us and why things change. Engage your child in conversations about the events we observe everyday.

Science  **6.1**

I wonder...

- Talk about the sun – how it rises in the morning, moves across the sky and disappears at night
- Observe the moon and how its shape changes from night-to-night
- Gaze at the stars and encourage your child to ask questions and wonder, “How many stars are in the sky? How far away are the stars?”
- Make a snowball in the winter and then bring it inside. Place it in the sink and watch it melt over time. “What happened? Why did it melt? How could we stop it from melting?”
- Place a plastic measuring cup outside to measure the rainfall



- Go outdoors to find insects. Talk about their names, how they build their homes and what they eat for food. Dig in the mud and look for worms.



Weather

Talk about the weather each day. Ask your child to check the weather outside and describe it to you. Ask, “What should we wear today? Do we need to wear a sweater, a coat, a hat and mittens? If it is raining, what do we need to bring with us?”



Seasons

Discuss the changes in the seasons. When winter is ending, notice that birds begin to reappear, the grass begins to turn green and flowers begin to bloom. When summer arrives, talk about the different clothes we get to wear and the different activities that remind us of summer – going to the beach and the park. When summer ends, point out the leaves on the trees and how they change colors and begin to fall.



Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

6

Plants, Fruits and Vegetables

Children act as scientists when they learn about living things. Think about ways to talk to your child about how plants are living things that need sun and water to grow. Caring for plants at home is a wonderful place to start.

Science  6.2

Start a Small Garden

- Decide where to plant your seeds: the yard, a flowerpot or a plastic container
- Determine what plants grow best in your area
- Make a list of what you will need: seeds, dirt, a spoon or some other tool to plant
- Plant the seeds with your child. Count the seeds and measure how far apart to plant.
- Decide when you will water the soil
- Ask questions along the way:
 - “How do the plants or flowers get food?”
 - What do plants and animals need to grow?
 - What will happen to the seeds we plant?
 - What would happen if we did not feed the plants?”



Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

RI* Family Favorite

APPLE TASTING

Next time you are at the supermarket purchase a few different types of apples. Choose different colors: one red, yellow and green. Cut a slice from each apple and have your child taste each slice. Ask your child to describe the different tastes and choose a favorite. Cut another slice and keep them out on the counter for a while. Watch what happens to the color of the inside of the apple when you leave it out.



6

Help your child become a scientific thinker:

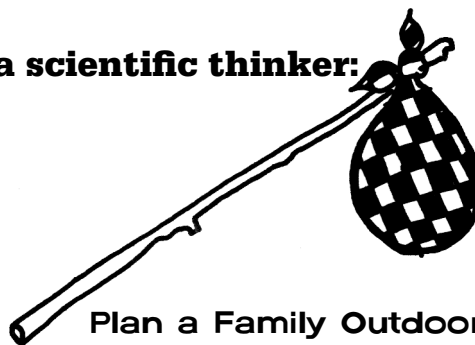
- observe
- collect
- describe
- record

Science  6.3

A Shadow Hunt

On a sunny day, take your child outside and look for shadows. Have your child find their own shadow. Move around and watch your shadows change. Try standing in your shadow. Then, stand in the light. Ask your child to describe what happens.

Now, look for as many shadows as possible. Observe the shadows made by birds, trees, signs, people, animals and flowers. Ask your child questions such as, “What has a shadow? When do you see it?”



Plan a Family Outdoor Scavenger Hunt*

1. **Develop** a list of items that you want each team to gather: seed pod, a white rock, a feather, something red, a leaf, a twig, a wild flower.
2. **Give** each team their own list of items and a bag large enough to hold the items.
3. **Set boundaries** and a time when everyone should return. At the end of the hunt, have everyone empty their bags and compare what they found.
4. **Help** your child create a list or draw pictures of the contents of the bag.

*This game works best when you work in teams.

Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

★ Use the back of this card to write or draw your list of items for the scavenger hunt... ➡

6

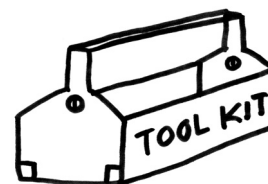
Simple, Fun Experiments for You and Your Child

Science  6.4

Tools for Your Scientist

Here are some items you can put together to create a tool box for your young scientist:

- measuring cups and spoons
- magnifying glass
- tweezers
- eyedroppers
- sponges
- straws
- food coloring
- scale



Changing Colors

Set out a bowl of warm water. Let your child experiment by dropping a little food coloring into the water. Add a few drops of the different colors.

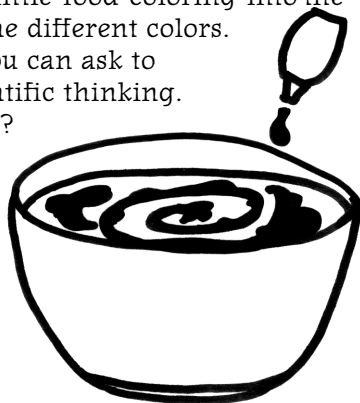
Think of all the questions you can ask to encourage your child's scientific thinking.

"What happens to the water?"

What colors can you make?

What combinations of colors make new colors?

What happens if we use a straw to blow bubbles in the bowl?"



Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

Ice Sculptures*

1. **Gather** together a variety of food storage containers and milk cartons in different shapes and sizes.
2. **Fill** your containers and ice cube trays with water. For a real creation, add a few drops of food coloring to each container.
3. **Place** all the containers in the freezer.
4. Once they freeze, **empty** the containers and put gloves on your child. Have fun creating ice sculptures.
5. **Sprinkle** kosher salt on the ice cubes so they will stick together.

*On hot summer days, it's fun to make your creations in a small pool.

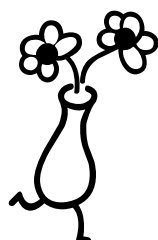
6

More Experiments For You to Try...

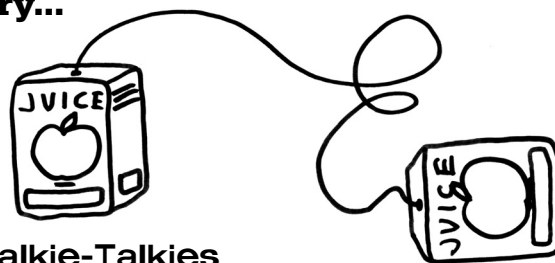
Science  6.5

How Flowers Drink

Place a white carnation or daisy in a vase or container that has about a cup of water on the bottom. Mix 10-20 drops of food coloring into the water. Red and blue food coloring works best. Ask your child to describe the color of the flower when you first put it in the water. Leave the flower in the colored water overnight. Watch and observe as your flower changes color. The longer you keep it in the water, the darker it becomes. Ask your child to look closely at the flower to see how the colored water travels from the bottom of the vase to the tip of the petal.



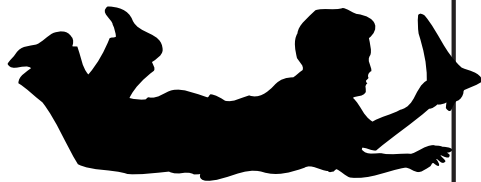
Rhode Island Early Learning Standards



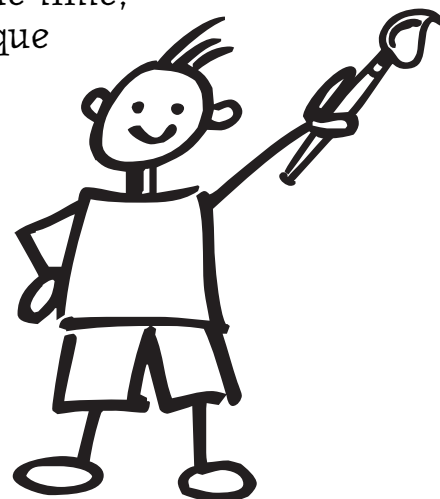
Walkie-Talkies

1. **Make** walkie-talkies with two juice boxes and a 10-15 foot piece of string.
2. **Cut** the bottom out of both juice boxes, rinse them out and let them dry.
3. **Poke** a small hole in the top of each box. Thread one end of the string through the hole and tie a knot so it is secure. Tie the other end of the string to the inside of the other box in the same way.
4. Have your child **hold** one walkie-talkie at one end of the room while you stand on the other. Ask your child to send you a message by talking softly through the bottom of the box and then to listen by placing the bottom of the box over one ear. Now you send a message.

Creativity



Through experimenting with sounds, colors, forms, motion and words, children communicate in ways that are all their own. When you encourage children to be involved in pretend or dramatic play, experiment with music, build with blocks or paint, you will start to discover their interests, abilities and the way they learn. At the same time, children will discover unique and wonderful ways to express what they know about their world.



Books Your Child Will Enjoy

Harold and the Purple Crayon by Crockett Johnson
Go Away Big Green Monster by Ed Emberly
It Looked Like Spilt Milk by Charles G. Shaw
Ben's Trumpet by Rachel Kadora
Amazing Grace by Mary Hoffman

Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

7

Begin to Notice and Appreciate Art

- Look for artwork in the community such as painted buildings, billboards and signs
- Go to an art show or museum
- Create an art show at home with your child's work

Explore Pictures in Books

- Choose a few of your child's books with interesting pictures
- Look at them together and ask questions. "What did the artist use to make this picture – a pencil, markers, paintbrush or maybe a camera?"
- Talk about how the artwork is similar or different
- Use words such as "light, dark, bright, shades of color, drawing, sketching, details" to describe the artwork



Creativity 7.1

RI* Family Favorite

YOUR CHILD'S VERY OWN ART BOX

Fill a box or laundry basket with simple art supplies. Don't forget to include a vinyl tablecloth for messy projects. You might want to include:

- Crayons, colored chalk, pencils, pens and markers
- Paper, tracing paper, old cards, newspaper and magazines
- Paste and glue sticks
- Scissors without sharp edges and a paper punch
- Cloth scraps, string, yarn, cotton balls, glitter and buttons
- Ruler and compass
- Finger, tempera and water color paint
- Stamp pad sets and bingo markers

Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

7

Building

Children can build with almost anything. As they build, they learn to use different materials to create structures. With materials that you already have around the house, children can create cities, zoos, farms, furniture, roads, airplanes, trains, robots and so much more! Be creative and follow your child's lead.

Getting Ready to Build

Pull some household items together that will serve as good building supplies.

- Cardboard boxes from shoes, diapers and tissues
- Milk or juice cartons
- Paper or plastic cups and plastic food storage containers
- Toilet paper and paper towel rolls
- Straws, sticks and rocks
- Ready-made wooden blocks
- Wood scraps
- Store-bought building sets like Legos®, Bristle Blocks®, Lincoln Logs® or Tinkertoy®



Let your child have fun and be creative. Find a safe place where the building can be left if your child wants to display it or add to it later. Add cars, pretend people and stuffed animals.

Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

Your Very Own Obstacle Course

You and your child can set up a series of activities outside that will encourage your child to climb over and under, jump, crawl and move in different directions. Gather together a variety of free or inexpensive materials such as:

- used tires
- Hula Hoops®
- milk crates
- big boxes
- boards
- carpet remnants

The possibilities are endless, limited only by your imagination. Most important, keep your child safe!

RI* Family Favorite

CREATE YOUR OWN NEIGHBORHOOD



Your child can use a variety of building materials to create their own little neighborhood. Color or decorate shoeboxes to make your house and the houses of friends and family. Create places where you go regularly such as the park, school and the grocery store.

7

Pretend Play

Dramatic or pretend play is a valuable way for young children to spend their time. When children pretend, they act out the experiences they have had and imagine things that could be. Just watch as their imagination and creativity grows.

Make a Pretend Box

You can encourage your child to pretend play by filling a shopping bag or box with materials and supplies that can be found in a place in the community. You can find things around your house that, with a **little imagination**, can become a:

- Doctor's Office
- Zoo
- Dentist's Office
- Party
- Veterinarian's Office
- Construction Site
- Shoe Store
- Gas Station
- Post Office
- Restaurant
- Library
- Flower Store
- Beauty Shop



RI* Family Favorite

GOING TO THE GROCERY STORE



Set up a grocery store with your child. Here are some ideas for items to include:

- Toy cash register or empty tea box for holding pretend money
- Pretend shopping cart or baby carriage
- Grocery store containers like milk cartons, plastic bottles and boxes
- Brown paper bag
- Coupons and store flyers
- Doll or stuffed animal to bring as a shopping helper
- Wallet, change purse or pocketbook

Take turns playing different roles — the cashier, the person who stocks the shelves or works in the deli or bakeshop. Encourage your child to write a shopping list. You can write the words that your child dictates or your child can draw pictures of the items. Make price tags. Count the items in your basket or bag as you check out.

Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

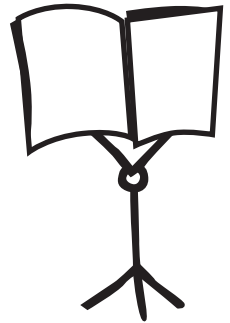
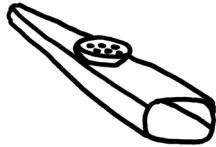
7

Music

Young children love to sing, listen and move to music. They also love to play musical instruments. They delight in words and sounds they hear in songs, rhymes and rhythms. Music helps to release tension and also provides children with another way to express themselves.

Get ready for some noise and great fun!

- Listen to all kinds of music on the radio – jazz, rock, classical and golden oldies. Play a children's tape and sing loudly.
- Play "Guess the Song" game. One person can start by humming a familiar song or clapping or tapping the beat or using a kazoo. Others can try to guess the song.
- Pretend to be in a band or parade. Use kazoos and musical instruments made from things you find around the house. For added fun, wear costumes.
- Talk to your child about the instruments you hear in the music that you listen to together. Try to detect the guitar, drums and piano.
- Encourage your child to explore and experiment with sounds with real or toy instruments such as a piano, xylophone or bells
- Have your child sing into a tape recorder. You and your child will love to listen to the recordings.
- Put together a musical performance to show to other family members
- Go to a musical play or concert at a nearby school or in the community



Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

★ Use the back of this card to make a list of your family's favorite songs... ➡

7

Make Your Own Instruments

Families can make musical instruments out of anything that makes noise. Use your imagination to create instruments from things you have around the house.

Drums

- Make your own set of fancy drums by decorating empty boxes, coffee cans with lids or plastic storage containers
- Use stickers, tape, paint or markers to decorate
- After decorating your drum, use different kinds of drumsticks to make different sounds. Try small sticks, toothbrushes or paintbrushes.
- Drum fast, slowly, loudly and softly to the music
 - Keep the beat to your favorite music
 - Beat out simple rhythms and have your child repeat after you. Take turns. Now you try repeating the beat your child makes.

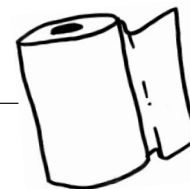


Rain Sticks

You will need:

- Cardboard tubes from paper towels
- Plastic carrier from a six pack of soda
- Some buttons or small stones
- Sponges or duct tape to seal the ends

Cover one end of the tube completely with a sponge or duct tape. Stuff plastic into the paper tube. Put a handful of buttons, small stones or other small objects into the paper towel tube. Cover the other end of the tube with another piece of sponge or duct tape. Decorate the tube anyway you wish. When the tube is turned up and down, you can hear the sound of rain.



Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

Physical Health and Development



Children love to move and explore.

They use their senses and bodies to discover the world around them. If children are active from an early age and learn healthy habits, they begin to develop life-long skills for healthy, happy living.

There are a number of things that you can do to help your child:

- Get stronger and build muscles
- Develop balance and coordination
- Use hands and fingers in a coordinated way
- Start to independently eat, dress, toilet and wash themselves
- Begin to understand that some foods are better for you than others
- Understand how to use their eyes, ears, fingers, nose and mouth to learn about the world



Books Your Child Will Enjoy

Play Rhymes by Marc Brown
Seven Blind Mice by Ed Young
My Five Senses by Gail Gibbons
Pretend Soup & Other Real Recipes
 by Mollie Katzen & Anne Henderson
The Napping House* by Audrey & Dan Woods
 *recommended for grandparents

Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

8

Hands, Bodies, Knees and Toes

Young children need to use their large and small muscles everyday.

Physical Health and Development 8.1



Children use their **large muscles** when they climb, run, balance and swing. Make use of what is available in your community. Visit playgrounds, neighborhood community centers and the YMCA to keep your child active.

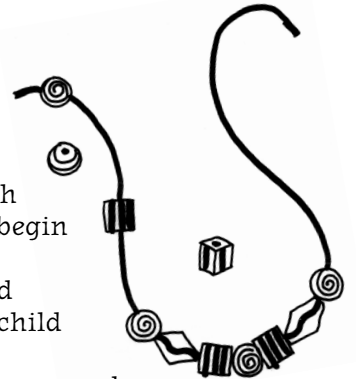
Here are some fun activities you can do indoors and out:

- Play kickball. Have one person pitch and the other kick.
- Bowl down a hallway using tin cans or milk cartons and a tennis ball
- Dance the Hokey Pokey, Bunny Hop, Chicken Dance, Macarena and do the Twist
- Move to the music while waving scarves
- Put masking tape on the floor and walk "on the tightrope"



Children use their **small muscles** when they balance blocks, string beads, cut with scissors, draw pictures and begin to write.

- Gather junk mail and old magazines and let your child cut out pictures
- Put puzzles together. You can make your own by taking favorite pictures from a magazine, pasting them on cardboard and then cutting the picture into pieces.
- Match socks from the laundry and put one sock inside the other before putting them away
- Open and close containers – jars, cartons, packages and boxes



Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

8

Making Sense

Children learn about the world through their five **senses**: seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling and touching.

As you go through your everyday routines, both indoors and outside, talk to your child about how things look, sound, taste, smell and feel.

- **Listen** to the sounds made by sirens, helicopters, clocks and lawnmowers
- **Smell** flowers, hand creams and different foods
- **Look** for interesting shadows on a sunny day and reflections in the water
- **Taste** foods with different flavors and textures: crunchy, spicy, mushy and sour
- **Feel** things with different kinds of surfaces

Let your child get messy!

Finger-paint in the tub.
Play in the dirt and mud.
Put shaving cream on a vinyl tablecloth and have fun!



Physical Health and Development 8.2



RI* Family Favorite

CAN YOU GUESS WHAT IT IS?

First, take a box and fill it with a few small items found in the house or yard such as a pinecone, rock, spoon, toothbrush or crayon. Ask your child to reach into the box without looking to feel one of the objects.



Ask questions like:

- ? "How does it feel — cold or warm? Hard or soft? Light or heavy?"
- ? Does it make a sound? Describe the sound.
- ? Does it have a smell? What does it smell like?
- ? What do you think it is?"

Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

8

Eating Healthy

A great way to teach your child about good nutrition is to talk about, prepare and eat healthy foods together.

- Explain that bodies need healthy foods to grow and that treats like cake, cookies and candy are okay once in a while
- Have your child help as you prepare simple and healthy recipes



Your child will love to help you prepare food. Think about recipes that use healthy ingredients.

How about this favorite recipe named after the storybook "Yummies" by James Marshall:

YUMMIES

- 6 teaspoons grated cheese
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 10 teaspoons flour
- 10 teaspoons Rice Krispies® cereal



Mix all of the ingredients together and form into little balls. Bake at 375° for ten minutes.
YUMMY!

While helping you in the kitchen, your child is also developing strength, coordination and control in their fingers and hands.

- ★ Peel carrots, cucumbers and potatoes with a vegetable peeler
- ★ Beat eggs and cream with a handheld beater
- ★ Take the shells off peanuts
- ★ Tear lettuce and cabbage
- ★ Stir pancakes and pudding with a large spoon
- ★ Wrap potatoes in aluminum foil for baking
- ★ Peel oranges, hard-boiled eggs and bananas
- ★ Slice soft foods like cheese, bread and pancakes with a blunt knife
- ★ Spread butter, cream cheese and peanut butter on crackers and celery

Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

★ Use the back of this card for your family's favorite healthy recipes... ➡

8

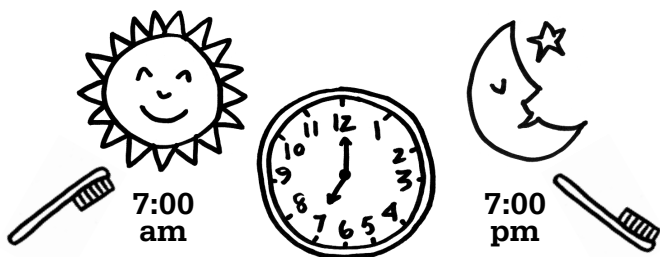
Safe and Sound

Healthy habits and daily routines are so important to learn at a young age. It's never too early to start!

Help your child develop the following daily habits:

- **Brushing** teeth in the morning and before bed
- **Combing** hair
- **Selecting** clothing and getting dressed
- **Putting away** clothing and toys

Encourage your child to follow regular morning and nighttime routines. In the morning, the routine could include eating breakfast, washing up, combing hair, brushing teeth, then getting dressed BEFORE play. Routines are VERY important and every family's routine will be different.



Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

Physical Health and Development 8.4



Did you know?

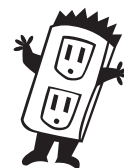
Preschool children need an average of **10 to 12 hours of sleep** everyday. Make sure your child gets enough rest and try to make bedtime into a peaceful routine. Try your best to limit TV to children's shows and then turn off the TV before bedtime.

The best way to stop the spread of germs is by **frequent hand washing**. Teach your child to wash their hands with warm water and soap after using the bathroom, blowing their nose, before eating and after playing. Try teaching your child to cough or sneeze into a tissue or arm instead of their hands.



It's time to start teaching your child **common safety routines**:

- Always use your safety seat and buckle up when driving in the car
- Always stay near you in the store
- Always carry scissors with the point down



Show your child how to cross the street and how to call **911** in an emergency.

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The Seasons

Children enjoy outdoor play every season of the year. Through play they develop strong muscles, balance and coordination.

Physical Health and Development 8.5



FALL

- ✿ Rake the leaves and jump in them!
- ✿ Go apple and pumpkin picking
- ✿ Watch leaves fall off the trees and "dance" like them
- ✿ Follow the leader
- ✿ Play "Red Light, Green Light"



WINTER

- ☾ Go sledding
- ☾ Build a snowman
- ☾ Go ice skating
- ☾ Dance like snowflakes



SPRING

- ✿ Plant a garden
- ✿ Dance with streamers
- ✿ Play in a sandbox
- ✿ Go bike riding
- ✿ Go for a walk and look for animals and insects

Rhode Island Early Learning Standards

- ✿ Have a race with your child until you are both out of breath
- ✿ Put on your boots and jump and splash in a puddle of mud

SUMMER

- ✿ Go swimming
- ✿ Wash the car
- ✿ Draw with sidewalk chalk
- ✿ Tend the garden
- ✿ Play hopscotch
- ✿ Jump over a rope on the ground and then play limbo with the jump rope
- ✿ Build sand castles at the beach
- ✿ Blow bubbles and pop them
- ✿ Play in the rain, as long as it is not thundering and lightning

